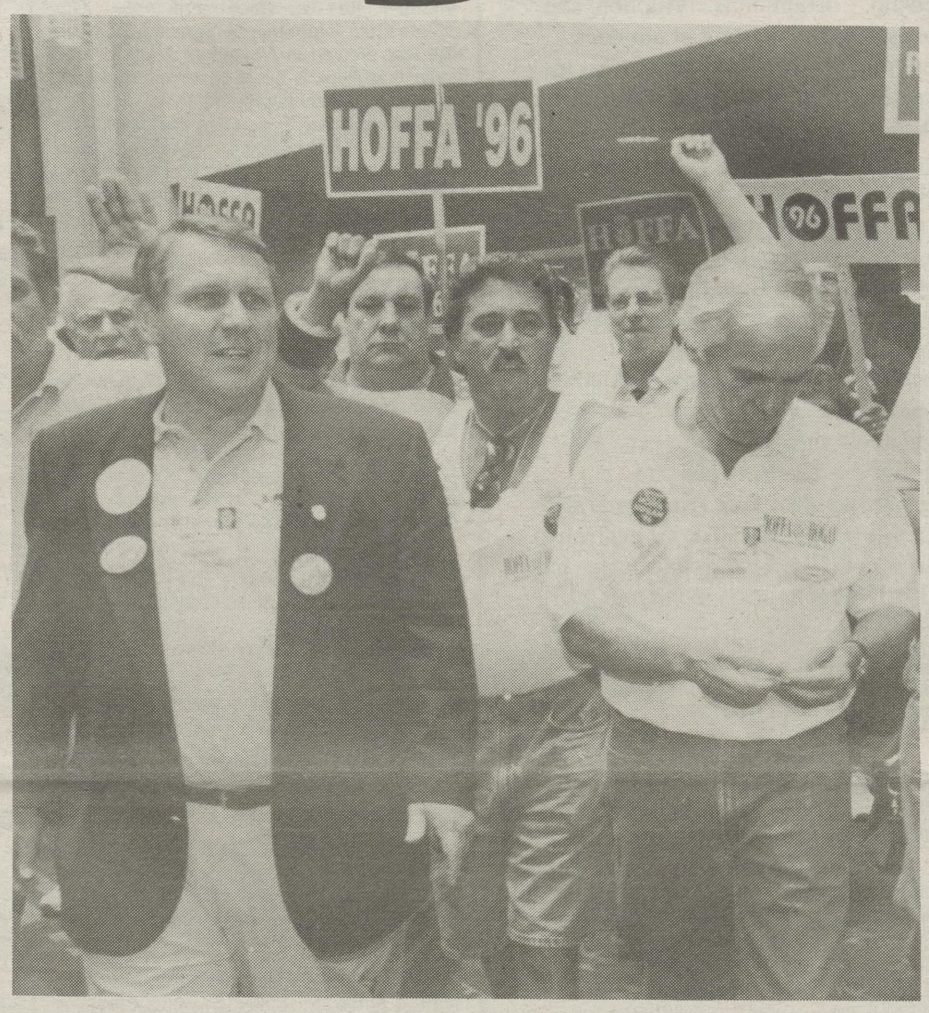
Convoy Dispatch

VOICE OF THE TEAMSTER RANK AND FILE SINCE 1975 — June 2001 # 193

Hogan's Heroes



Teamster President James Hoffa (left) with Billy Hogan Jr.(right) and Dane Passo. These two top Hoffa aides have been charged with engineering a sweetheart deal with a Hogan-family company, which would have slashed wages and benefits for 1,400 Teamsters. Hoffa removed elected officers who opposed the deal.

See pages 8 and 9 inside for details on the authoritative 207-page report by the Independent Review Board on how corruption is weakening our union right now.

Top associates of Hoffa have been charged with plotting for months to:

- take work from Teamster convention workers in Las Vegas and give it to non-union temps, at half the wages.
- enrich the brother of Billy Hogan, Jr, a non-union employer.
- remove or fire honest, elected Las Vegas Local 631 officers and stewards who opposed the sweetheart deal. .

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Rank & File Vigilance

Join Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), the movement of Teamsters that has worked for 25 years to make our Teamsters Union stronger and more democratic. The cost of a strong union is rank and file vigilance. The cost of joining TDU is just your $35 donation.

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Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

TDU membership is kept confidential. TDU solicits and accepts membership applications and donations *only* from Teamsters, retired Teamsters and spouses who are not employers. Only funds from Teamster members and their spouses can be used for campaign purposes.

TDU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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other _____

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___ $85 three-year membership fee. ($10 shall be rebated to the local chapter)

___ $20 for spouses, and Teamsters who gross less than $17,000 a year.

___ $20 for retirees. Retired from Local _____ .

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Letters From Our Members

Direct Elections for IBT Officers

In the most recent *Teamster* magazine, President Hoffa wrote, "The Teamsters is the only U.S.-based international union that directly elects its International officers through a mail ballot."

This is flat-out wrong.

Several of the largest international unions directly elect their international officers, including the Steelworkers, Laborers, Machinists and Mineworkers. International unions that hold direct elections by mail ballot include the Laborers, the American Postal Workers Union, the National Association of Letter Carriers and several others.

Before we had direct, mail ballot elections for Teamster International officers, our union's top officials were chosen and controlled by organized crime. Today they are selected by the members.

That is how it should be. Presently, we have the right to elect our convention delegates and top officers only because of the Consent Decree. Mail ballot elections for International officers and convention delegates should be written into the IBT Constitution at the upcoming Teamster Convention.

Andy Damis
Local 2000, Northwest Airlines
Seattle

Safe Workplace?

Thanks, TDU, for the article "Dangerous Workplace Ahead" in the last issue of Convoy. My company, Allied Waste, started a safety program just as described in the article. Workers were put on teams and pitted against one another. The company never discussed this with the union, saying it was a "perk" for employees to improve safety and attendance so they did not have to notify or bargain with the union.

It was only after reading the article that I took notice of what was going on. I started paying attention to what held a team back. If an employee reported an injury, his name would go on the board for all to see. If the injury caused the worker to receive light duty or time off, his name would appear for each day. Even though it may not be his fault, it's a serious setback for the team.

Our safety supervisor goes a step further to discourage reporting an injury. Without an investigation he can and has determined the injury avoidable and will write the employee up.

Allied Waste has even hired a paramedic to treat injured employees (instead of allowing them to go to the clinic). The company paramedic, not a doctor, treats the worker and decides if he should stay on the job.

Remember, companies aren't required to record minor injuries requiring only first aid.

The real goal here is obvious: to use financial incentives, peer pressure and intimidation to discourage employees from reporting accidents and injuries.

And what about the worker who had no accident or injury? He was part of a hype, a lottery. Month after month workers fight to win the lottery, and blame fellow employees for losing.

Thanks for exposing these gimmicks. We have now asked the company to bargain over this. We ask our Local 247 to support us in making our workplace safe.

Bob Sexton
Local 247, Allied Waste
Pontiac, Mich.

Our Future in Jeopardy Under Hoffa and Pals

As a Chicago UPS Teamster for about 25 years, I was appalled to see a former Local 705 member involved in Hoffa's list of scandals.

Dane Passo was caught with Bill Hogan Jr. trying to give away good paying Teamster jobs to line their own pockets. If Passo's job as a personal representative to Hoffa is to sell out working Teamsters, then the future of our union is in jeopardy under the reign of Hoffa, Hogan and Passo.

Our Local 705 under the leadership of John McCormick (now retired) and Jerry Zero has been a reform local. I hope that tradition will continue. I urge all Chicago Teamsters to continue to fight for reform.

We need to elect new national leadership. Corruption is corruption, and dishonesty is dishonesty. Let our dues money fight for members, not against us.

We need to spread the word that Tom Leedham's Rank and File Power campaign needs all of us to get involved, to bring our union back to us.

We need to involve UPS feeder drivers who are worried about their pension money being stolen from them. We need package car drivers and full-time insiders who are concerned about unrealistic production standards and subcontracting. We need to involve part-timers who are worried about their chance to get a full-time job and a Teamster pension.

We need to elect Tom Leedham's slate for our future. I believe that if Leedham is elected we will have a fighting chance in the 2002 UPS contract campaign to fulfill our members' hopes.

Craig Karnia
Local 705, UPS
Chicago

Son of a ... Bodyguard?

It is too often a Teamster tradition to pass the baton of local union leadership to the senior son of the local leader. A real dilemma occurs when "the king hath no sons."

Such is the case with the political machine of Local 41 in Kansas City. Mob puppet and former Teamster president Roy Williams had no sons. He was succeeded by a series of bodyguards (in order of seniority) — Dale "Dub" Nabors, Dan Johnson, and Phil Young.

Now that Young, whose son lacks age and experience, is rumored to be retiring from local union politics, the heir to the throne will likely be Duke Nabors, the son of bodyguard number one.

That the handpicked successors of old Rancher (Williams' mob code name) could still control this local over 20 years later attests to the strength and dominance of the Local 41 political machine. That the son of a bodyguard could still ride his daddy's coattails into office is more that I or any other member of Local 41 should be willing to tolerate.

Michael Savwoir
Local 41, UPS
Kansas City

TDU International Steering Committee

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Joe Fahey, Watsonville, Calif., Local 912
Ashley McNeely, Minneapolis Local 2000
Michael Savwoir, Kansas City, Mo., Local 41

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Members:
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Maria Martinez, Pasco, Wash., Local 556
Raul Rodriguez, Jr., Los Angeles Local 630
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Willie Smith, Columbus Local 413
Chris Sullivan, New York City Local 237

Alternates:
Alex Adams, Cleveland Local 407
Tom Sheibley, Brockton, Mass., Local 653

How to Contact TDU

We want to hear from you. Contact us at the address below for more information about TDU, or to send us articles or letters.

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Who We Are

CONVOY DISPATCH is the voice of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. We are the united rank and file movement to reform the Teamsters, created out of the merger of PROD and TDU.

We are truck drivers, dock workers, production workers—every kind of Teamster, and spouses, too.

We are a grassroots organization with chapters from coast to coast in the USA and Canada. We believe in returning this union to the membership and we are doing it. We are a democratic organization in which every member has a voice and vote. Our 15-member International Steering Committee was elected in November 2000 for one year. Our Rank & File Convention had over 400 representatives present.

We are proud Teamsters standing up for our rights. TDU invites all Teamsters interested in defending our contracts and reforming our union to join us. We do reserve the right to exclude those who are opposed to TDU and its principles.

Rank & File Bill of Rights

I. DEMOCRATIC BY-LAWS. All business agents and stewards should be elected. Vacancies in office should be filled by special election within three months. Local union committees should be elected. Contract and strike votes should be by majority (not two-thirds). All contracts should provide for elected officers retaining company seniority.

II. DIRECT ELECTION OF OFFICERS. General President and all International officers should be elected by the membership. International VPs elected by regions. An end to trusteeships and split-off locals.

III. A FAIR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Innocent until proven guilty, right to remain on the job until final procedure completed. Grievance procedure should include right to a speedy trial, arbitration by peers, and the right to strike if necessary.

IV. PRESERVATION OF WORKING CONDITIONS. The union's purpose is to expand and preserve what we have, not trade it away for anything less. People come first, not productivity.

V. SAFETY AND HEALTH. We have the right to enter the workplace without fear for our health and leave in the same condition we arrive. Teamsters should have the right, backed up by our union, to refuse unsafe work or hazardous conditions. We are not machinery.

VI. EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND FIVE-DAY WEEK. Forced overtime and unfair dispatch rules destroy our family life and cost us jobs. No mandatory overtime, "flexible" work weeks, or 70-hour slavery. We are for the advent of the four-day work week. We work to live, not live to work!

VII. A DECENT PENSION. Every dollar in the pension funds belongs to us. We are entitled to 25-and-out, cost of living on pensions, and union pension trustees elected by the rank and file and retirees to safeguard our money.

VIII. JUST SALARIES FOR OFFICERS. A union officer can't understand the problems of members who make less than half what he makes. No officer should make more than the highest paid working members in his jurisdiction. No multiple salaries from union, company, or government sources, or special fringes and pensions. Salary increases limited to the average increase for membership, and subject to membership approval.

IX. EQUALITY AMONG TEAMSTERS. Bring all wage levels up to the highest standards, not a lot for the few and little for the many. Fight the hardest for the lowest paid.

X. END TO DISCRIMINATION. Employers have used the differences in age, race and sex to divide us for decades. We oppose these injustices and divisions. Support affirmative action to correct past injustices. Employers should bear the cost of their past discrimination, not the members.

Organizing for Power

UPS Contract Battle First Order of Business for New IBT Administration

July 31, 1997. After a year of planning and four months of intensive rank and file activity, UPS Teamsters were ready. The Madison Heights (Detroit, Michigan) hub was typical for a well-organized building. Some part-time employees of the pre-load shift had arrived early in excited anticipation of the battle. Across the country, thousands of UPS Teamsters were on the line outside UPS facilities 'Ready to Strike!" Teamsters outside the eastern time zone were finding ways to be in touch with the East to "be there" the moment the strike would begin.

This was the unity and determination that won the UPS strike. It didn't happen by accident or automatically.

It required preparing Teamster members old and new to be willing to strike. It meant turning day-to-day struggles for respect on the job into a resolve to fight and win. Most of all it came from educating thousands of UPS employees on the details of our demands for full-time jobs, an end to subcontracting, for better wages, and to save their pensions.

That's why we won every demand.

The Teamsters waged the most dramatic and successful strike in modern labor history. The workers in Madison Heights, and Teamsters like them at hundreds of UPS buildings, made it happen.

What will it take in 2002 to build the same kind of power, and to win a decent contract?

Getting Organized

It will take getting organized in every building and center. Get names, phone numbers, addresses and e-mail of your co-workers. If yours is a large center divide the job up and make up a shared list. Get all the key strike captains from 1997 together and involve new ones. Make a chart of your center. How many people it will take to canvass your whole center? Usually one for every 10 members works best. Fill those positions, who will be the communication link to 10 co-workers.

During the last contract campaign, the International prepared a useful chart for organizing your workplace. Copies are available from TDU.

Figure Out Priorities In Your Center

Make up a short survey. Make a list of about 10 key issues that you think will be important for the contract negotiations. If you need help making the list a good start is the Platform for Change from *Rank and File Power at UPS* (available from TDU, see ad this page). Ask your co-workers to rank the issues in order of priority from one to 10. Use the surveys to compile a list of the top five priorities, and of course to get members involved and talking up the issues. Make out a leaflet, listing the priorities and pass it out. Take extra care to involve the part-timers. In 1997 management tried to turn part-timers and full-timers against each other, but they failed, because we organized for unity.

"By putting specific contract demands out there for the members to focus on we can create a real picture of what we need to fight for in the 2002 contract," said Mike Solomon, a part-timer in New Orleans Local 270. "Without clear priorities members will be stuck reacting to UPS's unreasonable demands, rather than on our fair demands for improvements."

Action Now Key to Success Next Year

In 1997, in centers where workers had organized their own member-to-member network things ran smoothly during the contract campaign and strike. Where no organizing happened business agents, stewards, and strike captains scrambled through constant crisis management. When the time comes to attend proposal meetings, hold rallies, turn out No votes on a bad contract, or to stage a picket line, the better organized you are the more muscle you can flex.

"Our 1997 contract fight was a huge success of rank and file power in our center. If we had not organized ourselves a year ahead of time we never would have pulled it off.

"When we had to strike, we were all prepared. We need to know what our issues are now and get something started.

"At our center, UPS is still using nonunion part-timers. We've grieved it, but management is continuing its push to divide us. It's going to take time to rebuild our solidarity and strength for this next contract."

Wendy Averhoff
Local 638, Minneapolis

UPS and Downs

UPS Ergonomics Memo Exposed.

UPS fought hard against OSHA ergonomics regulations that would offer workers some protection from repetitive motion injuries. The company claimed that the regulations would not help workers. On March 7, Congress overrode the protections.

But at an April hearing on government ergonomics policy UNITE health and safety director Eric Furmin presented an internal UPS memo showing that UPS has invested substantially in ergonomics. The memo reveals that UPS has invested significantly in new trucks, ergonomic tools for drivers, new warehouse equipment, new computer software and hardware, new office equipment and extensive training of personnel. The company never shared with OSHA the benefits of its investments in ergonomics and the impact that these measures had on their bottom line.

Ancient UPS Package Car Injures Three Drivers.

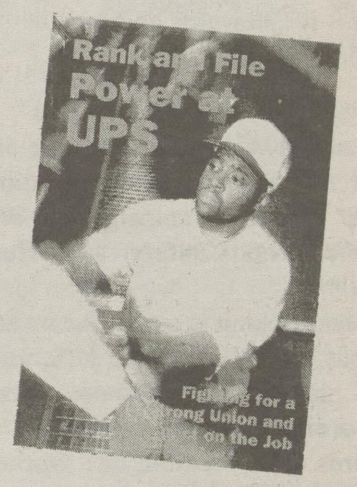
A package car without power steering has claimed its third victim in Eagan, Minn. A third driver has been diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome that will require painful surgery. Both of the other two drivers were out of work for over six weeks recovering from their injuries. Despite this stunning safety record the vehicle is still in service. We need to insert language into Article 18 that will allow employees to use the grievance procedure to force UPS to take out of service equipment or vehicles with material defects or shortcomings that have resulted in multiple injuries.

UPS Teamsters Ask About Cost of Living (COLA).

Inflation for 2000 would have had to reach a 20-year high for UPS employees to receive the COLA outlined in Article 33. April 1, 2001 was the date for the first bonus. Full-timers received a 60¢ raise August 1, 2000, a 2.6 percent increase. Inflation was 3.7 percent in 2000 according to the government index listed in the contract. The net loss was 1.1 percent in buying power. Inflation would have to top wage increases by two percent before the first $100 bonus would come due. Even if inflation topped eight percent, the highest in over 20 years, full-timers would only have received $200. The situation for part-timers is worse. This situation needs to be addressed in the next contract.

Rank & File Power at UPS

Fighting for a Strong Union and Respect on the Job



Rank & File Power at UPS tells the story of how UPS workers have fought for respect on the job and in their union.

The 70-page book explores the history of UPS labor relations and how the 1997 strike was built on a foundation of rank and file organization.

It also tells UPS what they can do to protect their jobs and win better working conditions.

$5 each; $4 for 25 or more

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Reform Builds Union Power Through Membership Power

Local 556 Teamsters March for Justice

Local 556 Teamsters and supporters marched 500 strong through Pasco, Wash., on June 3 to send a message to their employers that, in the new Local 556, members are active and united in the struggle for strong contracts and workplace safety.

The Local 556 Justice March and Unity Picnic was planned and organized by stewards and members who are active in campaigns at Iowa Beef Processors (IBP), Smith Frozen Foods and Lamb Weston. These "big three" companies account for more than 90 percent of the local's membership.

Teamsters, other unionists and community supporters drove four hours from Seattle, Tacoma and Portland to show their solidarity, including members from Teamster locals 206, 763 and 741.

The march marked the second anniversary of the 1,300-member strike at IBP. The five-week strike ended when International VP Jon Rabine negotiated a deal that eliminated workers' retirement plan behind the back of the members' bargaining committee.

After the strike, Teamster General President James Hoffa put Local 556 in trusteeship to prevent rank-and-file reformers from winning the local election. That move delayed but could not deny the rising tide of reform in 556. A year later, members swept a reform slate into office.

The new leadership has ushered in a wave of new activity in the local — a health and safety campaign at IBP, a rank-and-file contract campaign at Smith Frozen Foods, and training programs for stewards and members from across the local.

Safety First

For the workers at IBP, the Justice March was the public coming-out party for their Campaign for Worker Safety, Food Safety and Humane Slaughter.

Meatpacking is one of the most dangerous industries in the U.S. and the IBP plant in Pasco is no exception. According to the company's own records, an incredible 781 workers in the Pasco plant have suffered injuries severe enough to force them to miss work in the last two years alone. The plant only employs 1,300 workers.

The same speedup that causes this epidemic of injuries also undermines the company's ability to maintain sanitary conditions and to assure that cattle are slaughtered in a humane way.

As part of their campaign, Local 556 members are documenting safety problems, unsanitary conditions and incidents of inhumane slaughter through an extensive member-to-member survey. Workshops are being scheduled with health and safety experts where members will generate proposals for safety improvements.

Local 556 will compile the surveys, workshop proposals and other data and issue a report with recommendations for changes that will protect workers and consumers and halt inhumane slaughter violations.

"After that, the company has two options," says Secretary-Treasurer Maria Martinez. "They can sit down and negotiate real improvements or they can have a battle on their hands."

The new leadership seems to have the company's attention. IBP dismissed the Pasco plant manager. The new manager has admitted there are problems and says he wants to work with the union.

"If they're serious, we are ready to work with the company to do something positive for workers and consumers," Martinez said. "But this isn't about promises and it's not about anybody's attitude. It's about negotiating real changes with real guarantees."

A Better Future for Workers and Their Families

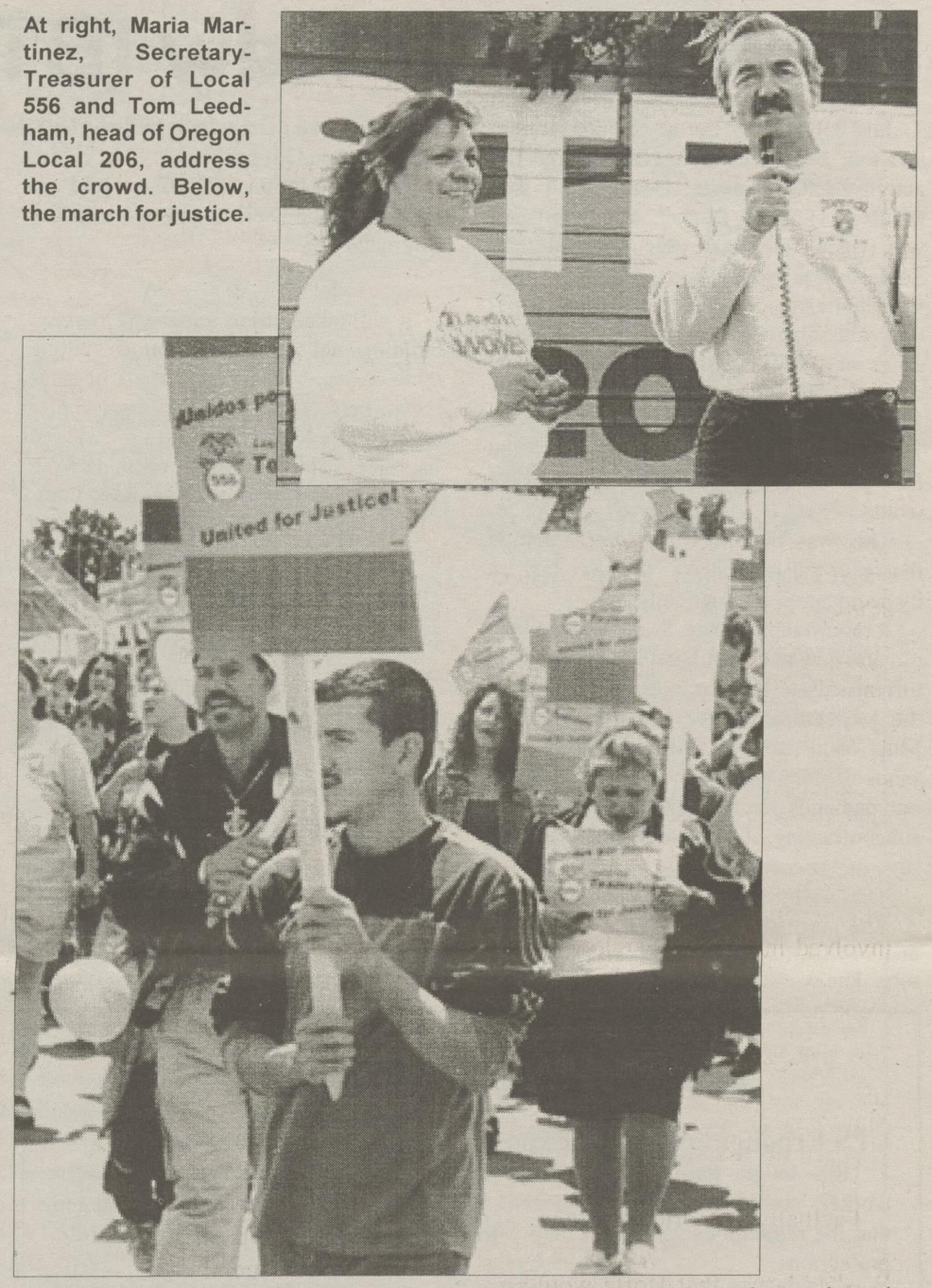
After three months of negotiations, workers at Smith Frozen Foods unanimously rejected a company offer that would have cut workers' take-home pay by raising health care costs more than wages.

Since then, workers have been circulating an open letter to the owners, Sharon and Gordon Smith, a Republican Senator from Oregon, who have not participated in negotiations.

"I left my family in Mexico in 1986 to get ahead and help my children. But with our wages, we can't," said Antonia Moreno, a 9-year Smith employee. "I will continue to fight so that my children can better themselves and have a good education."

At the rally, shop steward and negotiating committee member Lex Newman told co-workers and supporters, "With what they are offering, we can't support ourselves and our families. ... We have to be able to make a better future for our families."

Smith workers are hopeful that they will reach an agreement on a contract that preserves low-cost health insurance and a decent wage. But they are preparing to take their message to the public if necessary.



At right, Maria Martinez, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 556 and Tom Leedham, head of Oregon Local 206, address the crowd. Below, the march for justice.

Member Power = Union Power

For decades, Local 556 members were kept out of the loop. In a local where 80 percent of the members speak Spanish, meetings were conducted in English without translation. No wonder nobody attended.

The lack of member involvement allowed union officials to pay themselves inflated salaries and be unaccountable for their failure to secure good contracts and defend members' rights.

The new Local 556 has embarked on a course of building union power through membership power.

- Regular leadership trainings where stewards and members learn strategies for enforcing their rights.
- New stewards have been elected at IBP, Smith, Lamb Weston, Coke and UPS.
- At IBP, a committee of stewards and volunteers run the health and safety campaign.
- The contract at Smith is being negotiated by a bargaining committee that includes 15 working members.
- Bloated officers' salaries were slashed by 60 percent to finance programs that build power for the members.

"Before, the members and shop stewards had no support from our union officials," said Arturo Aguilar, a shop steward from the slaughter department at IBP. "But things are totally different now. That doesn't mean that we have solved all of our problems. We haven't. But now, when there's a problem the stewards and members are taught about our rights and what we can do to protect ourselves. For the first time, Local 556 is our union."

President of Puerto Rico Local 901 Joins Leedham Slate

Noel Colón, the President of Teamsters Local 901 in Puerto Rico, has joined the Tom Leedham Rank & File Power Slate.

Raised in New York City, Colón joined the Teamsters in 1976 when he moved to Puerto Rico and began working as a welder on the docks of San Juan.

Colón was soon elected shop steward and then chief shop steward by the Teamster port workers. After serving terms as an elected trustee and local vice president, Colón was elected Local 901 President on a reform slate in 2000.

What made you first get active in the union?

Growing up, I saw a lot of discrimination. As a Latino, I saw how we experienced discrimination by being denied access to good jobs, housing, everything. From a very early age, I got used to being involved in fights to win a voice for my people. Getting involved in union struggles for safety, job security, and better healthcare just came naturally.

The secretary-treasurer of your local was a member of the 1998 Hoffa Slate. But as president of your local, you're running with Tom Leedham. Why?

I actually supported Hoffa myself in 1996. Most Local 901 members did. We had hopes that Hoffa would make positive changes within the union. One of the things we were looking for was for the International to do more to encourage the participation of Hispanics and other minorities. Spanish-speaking Teamsters pay dues like everyone else, but their participation is often blocked because meetings and contracts and other important documents aren't translated. We also feel that the General Executive Board should be as diverse as our union's membership. Under Hoffa, that obviously has not happened.

In Local 901, we developed serious differences with the way that our local was being run. Our secretary-treasurer ran our local like a dictator. He wanted all of the decisions and power in his hands. The people got turned off by that because they felt their voice wasn't heard. They drifted away and our union got weaker and weaker. We ran for office because we needed to open up our union to restore its strength.

What kinds of changes have you made at Local 901 to build more power for the members?

We rewrote the local's constitution. We created a Stewards' Council that has more than 100 members — all of them elected by the members. All of the big decisions that are made by our local — the activities we're going to organize, political action, any major expenses — all have to be approved by the Stewards' Council. Before the secretary-treasurer used to make all those decisions by himself and he was not accountable to anyone.

Now, the decisions in Local 901 are opened up to debate on the Stewards' Council

Another thing that we did was to establish regular meetings in every shop. Every three months, every shop has a general meeting of all the workers where people get together and talk about their problems. One of the biggest problems we have is our healthcare. In a lot of smaller shops, the workers have to pay a percentage of the cost of the coverage, and the costs are really high. We're putting changes in place that will give members access to low-cost healthcare in a Teamster clinic in San Juan, and service in affiliated hospitals and clinics for members who live on other parts of the island.

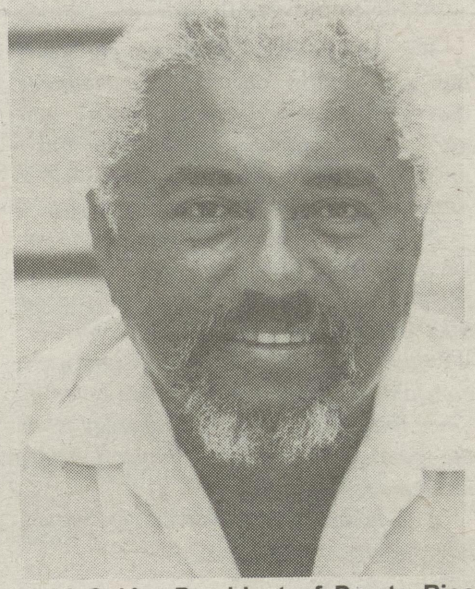
What changes would you like to see the International Union make to increase power for working members?

The International needs programs that are going to encourage membership participation. A lot of Teamsters work in smaller shops in manufacturing and warehouses. They're not covered by national contracts. They need more assistance from the International to win good contracts and get ahead. The International could make a big difference by providing assistance with negotiations.

The International should also be bringing together locals that have members who work for the same employers or in the same industries to talk about common problems, to share strategies that are working, and to develop joint strategies so that Teamster members from different locals are taking on these problems together. We should be looking to establish coordinated bargaining and contracts that cover workers in several locals. The more numbers and the more coordination, the more power we have.

A lot of Teamsters don't vote in the union elections. Why is that and what can we do about it?

For a lot of members, the union is just about paying their dues. Once in a while they see some union official who doesn't even speak to them. They don't feel part of the union. We need to change that. That starts by getting people information. Then we need to get people involved. We need to get people together to deal with the problems. Talk to people about how they can make things different. You'd be surprised. When people have the chance to make a difference, they grab it. We've had good results in Local 901. We still have a long way to go. But our commitment to opening up the union and reaching out to the members has made a big difference.



Noel Colón, President of Puerto Rico Local 901 and candidate on the Rank & File Power Slate.

Tom Leedham on Corruption in Our Union

We asked Tom Leedham, candidate for Teamster General President on the Rank & File Power Slate, to comment on the recent report by the Independent Review Board (IRB) charging Billy Hogan Jr. and Dane Passo with corruption. Leedham's comments follow.

The IRB report reveals an incredible scheme that would have struck a devastating blow to our members and to contracts in the trade show division.

The report also shows that Hoffa knew or should have known what Billy Hogan was up to in Las Vegas.

Hoffa is no stranger to Billy Hogan's record. Hogan, after all, was Hoffa's running mate in 1996 until he was forced to step down after being charged with rampant nepotism in Local 714.

In fact, the IRB report provides a stunning picture of the numerous missed opportunities Hoffa had to stop Hogan's scheme. Good Teamsters warned Hoffa that a scam was in the works.

But Hoffa not only didn't stop the deal, he actually removed the elected leaders of Local 631 for standing up to Hogan. Hoffa even went so far as to fire his own trustee when he too opposed the scam!

RISES's Failure to Investigate

The IRB report also highlights the failure of Hoffa's RISE program. RISE investigator Ed Stier learned of the dirty dealings in Las Vegas in September 2000. Yet, Stier and RISE failed to investigate.

The Hogan scandal highlights why we need a real anti-corruption program that is independent of those in power.

Just as importantly, the IRB findings make clear that we need elected leaders who are committed to aggressively rooting out corruption wherever it appears, rather than looking the other way when close associates are involved.

This fall's International Teamster election is an important step toward a cleaner union. As Teamsters members, we can vote for a strong 21st century Teamsters Union. Or, we can continue down the path of business as usual. I am running for Teamster president to give working Teamsters a choice for the future.

The Future of the Teamsters Union

The Teamsters Union is at a crossroads. Will we survive and grow into the 21st century, or will our great union look backward to its best days. The same question faces the whole labor movement of North America.

Our union's highest body meets just as our union faces the big questions that will determine our fate. This convention should kick off a discussion inside our union that can lead to a positive, unified direction.

Just some of the questions before our Teamsters Union:

We Need an Organizing Plan to Build Teamster Power. In the past two years, our union has shrunk by 11,000 members, as the economy has boomed. The beginnings of a turnaround and growth we saw in the 1990s have been erased. We have lost the most ground in our core industries such as freight, construction, carhaul, warehousing and food processing.

We need to begin a major discussion of what it will take to grow. How can we free up financial resources to create a massive organizing fund? What is our strategic plan that targets our core industries and companies? How will we involve our members in organizing?

We Need New Teamster Structures for the 21st Century. Our Teamster structure was set nearly 100 years ago. Meanwhile the economy, communications, and our culture have undergone drastic changes. We need to develop more master contracts and pattern bargaining. We need councils of stewards and members for each industry and major company. We need local unions that unite members in like industries.

We Need New Ways to Involve Members. Local officers are frustrated with members who won't come to meetings to participate, and members are frustrated with officers who hold the same old meetings. Organizations need to adapt, or they become stale. For starters, we need a discussion on a Membership Bill of Rights. (See page 7.)

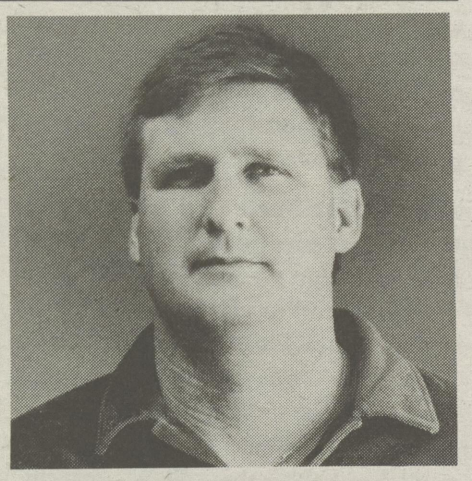
We Need an Open Leadership. Our union is more diverse than ever, in terms of age, crafts, culture, languages spoken, gender and race. Yet look at the 24 voting members of the General Executive Board: 23 are white, 23 are men. This situation would be pitiful for a corporation; for a union it is worse. The rank and file feel closed out, in a system that promotes an old-boy network of leaders. We need new plans and a new openness to leadership development.

Our convention should launch a discussion and debate about how to change to grow. We need proposals, and counter proposals, that are put out to members. We need to hold national speak-outs and invite all our members to participate. The convention should not be the end, but the beginning of a major discussion about our future.

Here's what the convention should *not* be: a cult of personality, a party in a Las Vegas casino where officials pat themselves on the back about how great they and their Great Leader are doing, how we are winning all over, kicking Overnite's butt and on the road to perfection. The only bumps on the road are members who dare to speak the truth.

We all have seen organizations whose leaders use that method of covering all problems with PR. They are not thriving, they are shrinking.

It's time for Teamsters to open a real debate about the hard issues facing our union, and to chart a new course that builds Teamster power in the 21st century.



We used to have an organizing strategy and member organizing committees that worked, now we have smoke and mirrors and officials handing out business cards and saying, "Call me." It's pitiful what is happening with Overnite.

At Local 200, between 1996 and 1998, we had a Volunteer Organizing Committee and an Action Team. We organized 800 workers and they all got contracts. We had actions all over the city and were constantly in the news. Members loved it. Since then, there's been no strategy from the International and we haven't organized a single member.

If members were involved, we would have results.

Darryl Connell
Local 200, ABF, convention delegate
Milwaukee

We need to defend our contracts. We have so many grievances.

As Teamsters, we should be standing up for our rights to the best of our ability, but we're not. We're watching our rights being taken away.

Tom Leedham knows how to exercise rank and file power to be a force. It doesn't take expensive attorneys. We have the power, we just need to use it.

Frank Villa
Local 630, Sysco, Los Angeles

Our members are tired of the corruption and lack of democracy weakening the union. Hoffa lies about his role in our contract at Northwest Airlines. He tried to sell us an inferior contract, but it was our members who fought and won more.

We need an International leadership that gets behind members, that will be there for us when we need them and not back down to corporations like Northwest Airlines. We need leaders who get off the sidelines, because their job is not done just because a contract was signed.

Anne Meyer, convention delegate
Local 2000 Vice President
Minneapolis

Proposals to Strengthen, Reform Teamsters Union

Prior to the Teamster Convention of June 25-29, elected delegates submitted a large number of resolutions and constitutional amendments to reform and strengthen our union. Whatever happens in Las Vegas on those particular motions, those issues will remain under consideration and discussion within our union.

Some examples of the Amendments to the IBT Constitution submitted include:

Members' Right to Vote

Protection of Teamster members' Right to Vote for International Officers in secret mail ballot elections, with impartial supervision and fair rules. (Amendment to Art. IV). Present language does not provide for mail ballots, impartial supervision, or fair rules.

Right to Election All Delegates to IBT Conventions in secret mail ballot elections, with impartial supervision and fair rules. (Amendment to Art. III.) Present language does not provide for elections at all (we have an election this time only because of the consent decree). Present language also allows the appointment of nearly 200 unelected delegates!

Officers' Salaries

Limit International Union salaries to $150,000 and Eliminate Multiple Salaries for such officials. (Amendment to Art. V.) Presently 137 International union officials are drawing multiple salaries. This provision would save our union millions to use in organizing.

Limit Employers from Using Teamster Officials by requiring officers to sign a contract limiting their ability to work for management labor relations, taking their union connections and information with them. (Amendment to Art. II.)

Some examples of Resolutions submitted to the Convention include:

Organizing

Establishment of a Strategic Organizing Program to build our union in key industries, train and employ Teamster members as organizers, using funds saved from eliminating multiple salaries.

Pensions

Require Pension Trustees to be Accountable and Provide Retirement with Dignity. The International would be required to work for positive changes, and issue semi-annual progress reports.

Contract Campaign at UPS

Build Rank & File Power at UPS to Win a Contract Victory. Direct our leaders to set up a major rank and file campaign, put members on the bargaining committee, and target major issues to win.

Other resolutions deal with establishing a strike fund; putting an end to union functions at golf resorts; building strength and unity through diversity; eliminating two-tier contracts; protecting the members' privacy; working for health and welfare protection for all Teamster retirees.

For information on these and other issues that are before the Teamster Convention, and will remain issues under discussion in our union, contact TDU.

Get Convention News Online!

Even if you can't make it to Vegas, you can still get up-to-date news and information from the IBT convention on the Web. Log on to www.tdu.org or www.leedham.org every day of the convention to stay informed!

Membership Bill of Rights

Preamble. The Teamsters Union belongs to its members and membership involvement is the source of our union's strength, power and integrity. Accordingly, the members of this union enjoy inalienable rights to participate in the decisions that affect them. These rights shall not be limited to the legal minimum possible, but shall be maximized to bring all members into full participation. The following are specific rights that shall not be abridged:

1. ***The Right to Participate.*** All members shall have the right to participate in meetings, elections and all other aspects of the Union without fear of intimidation, discrimination or retaliation of any kind.

2. ***The Right to Information.*** All members shall be entitled to receive from their Local Union a copy of their contract along with any supplements or written addenda, Local Union bylaws, International Constitution, and (if applicable) the Local Union's most recent LM-2 or LM-3 financial report. Where a significant number of affected members speak a language different from the language that the documents are prepared in, such documents shall be translated and made available.

3. ***The Right to Elect Stewards.*** Where applicable, members shall have the periodic right to elect by secret ballot their shop steward, subject to reasonable written rules. (Where exceptional circumstances make this impractical for a certain unit, written policies shall explain such exception.)

4. ***The Right to Participate in Bargaining.*** All affected members shall be entitled to elect members to be part of the bargaining committee for local contracts, or have elected stewards as a part of such committee. All members shall have a right to a secret ballot vote on contracts and amendments to contracts, and to have a written copy of such changes prior to voting on them.

5. ***The Right to Attend Meetings.*** All members shall have the right to attend, participate and make motions in Local Union meetings. Further, members shall have the right to attend, as observers, meetings of the joint council, region, or conferences to which their Local Union is affiliated.

6. ***The Right to Approve Salaries of Officers.*** Members shall have the right to vote on approval of salary increases for Local Union officers and agents, at a meeting where proper advance notice has been given that such a vote shall be taken.

7. ***The Right to Vote on Merging or Dissolving Local Unions.*** No Local Union shall be merged, dissolved or split without an affirmative referendum vote of the affected members of the Local Union. The referendum shall be conducted by secret ballot voting, with a provision for equal space for pro and con arguments provided to all members with the ballot materials.

8. ***The Right to Participate in Fair Local Union Elections.*** Local Unions, as well as the International Union, shall conduct officer elections by mail ballot voting, and such elections shall be conducted by an impartial agency.

9. ***The Right to Accountable Health & Welfare and Pension Trustees.*** Where members participate in benefit funds that are governed by union agents or jointly by union and employer agents, members shall be assured of accountability of those trustees selected by the union. This accountability shall be through direct election or other means which provide meaningful input from affected members.

10. ***The Right to Fair Representation.*** Members are entitled to have their grievances decided fairly and processed promptly. Grievants and stewards shall be informed of the time and place of any hearings, and have a right to attend. In cases where the Union declines to process a grievance, the member is entitled to an explanation.

Do Teamsters Need a Bill of Rights?

Elected delegates to the Teamster Convention put forward an amendment to the Teamster Constitution to include a Bill of Rights. Presently our constitution has no bill of rights for members, although it devotes many pages to the rights and powers of officers.

What do you think? Do you agree that this proposed Bill of Rights would increase accountability in our union, encourage more membership involvement, and make our union stronger? Or do you think we don't need such membership rights? This debate will go on amongst Teamsters, and you should be a part of it.

Sweetheart Deals, Bloated Expense Accounts, Removal of Elected Officers in Las Vegas

New Charges Blast Hoffa Leadership

The Independent Review Board (IRB), the court-appointed panel responsible for rooting out corruption in the Teamsters Union, on May 23 issued a blistering 207-page report outlining charges against two top associates of James Hoffa, and another Hoffa appointee assigned to oversee a Las Vegas local.

The IRB has charged Billy Hogan, Jr., a key Hoffa aide and Hoffa's first choice to be his running mate for Teamsters General Secretary-Treasurer, and Dane Passo, Hoffa's special assistant, with engineering a sweetheart deal with a Las Vegas convention and trade show contractor, whose vice president is Hogan's brother. The deal would have slashed wages to $8 and eliminated pension and health and welfare benefits, devastating the standard of living for some 1,400 Teamsters.

Billy Hogan is also the president of the 100,000-member Chicago joint council, and considered the most influential powerbroker in the Hoffa administration. Passo has been Hoffa's go-to man and "personal overseer" for local union officers around the country.

Also charged, in a separate 23-page report, is Ed Jacobson, another Hoffa International Representative, who Hoffa appointed as trustee of Las Vegas Local 631. The IRB charges that Jacobson obstructed the investigation in an attempt to cover up the sellout. Local 631 has 4,800 members, 1,400 in the convention industry.

Detailed Peek Inside Teamster Politics and Corruption

The IRB report provides a very detailed inside look at corruption in the Hoffa administration, which is lobbying hard to put the IRB out of business. It is not a pretty picture: secret deals with employers, charity golf tournaments where union officials are bought off, whistleblowers fired, and union members told to leave town within one week for their own safety. (p. 160, Hogan charges)

▶ Hoffa himself met with Hogan, Passo, and Richard Simon, president of the nonunion company (United Temps) involved in the sweetheart deal. The meeting took place at a Chicago restaurant partially owned by Simon, who picked up the tab. (p. 100)

▶ Hoffa and his executive assistant, Carlow Scalf, repeatedly ignored warnings from various union officers about what Passo and Hogan were doing. In fact, the original trustee of Local 631, the assistant trustee and various business agents were fired or removed by Hoffa when they complained about the sweetheart deal. (pp. 140-141)

▶ Passo and Hogan repeatedly hired cronies with no union experience to replace experienced or elected leaders. (pp. 126-130, and elsewhere) Vito Locascio, a convicted felon (interstate theft of freight and passing forged checks at a casino) from Chicago was placed in charge of Teamster efforts to get out the vote in Nevada, although he himself was not eligible to vote. (pp. 130-1) Locascio was treated to 87 free meals on the union tab, while other cronies were regularly treated similarly. The IRB charges note, "It is unquestioned that pleasing Passo's friends was an adequate reason for the IBT to expend resources." (p. 133) Passo's monthly expenses were approved by Scalf.

▶ The Hoffa Scholarship Fund Golf Tournament in Las Vegas was used for furthering the illegal sweetheart deal. Simon and Hogan's company, United Temps, paid for $1,200 tickets and gave them to Hogan's relatives and other union officials for a luxury golf trip. It is illegal for a union officer to accept gifts from employers. The employer joined the golf tournament as well, to move the scam along.(p. 20)

▶ Hoffa's RISE program, which he claims makes the IRB unnecessary, was notified nine months ago of what was going on, when a Teamster vice president asked RISE director Ed Stier to investigate.(p. 24) Stier, according to the IRB report, replied that the union should stay away from Simon, but RISE failed to stop the dirty deals. We offered Stier a chance to comment, but he declined.

▶ Hoffa's reasons for placing Local 631 into trusteeship, and throwing out the democratically elected head of the local, Tim Murphy, are shown by the report to be phony. It was Murphy who contacted the IRB, after his complaints were ignored by the Hoffa administration. (p. 5-6) The reasons given by Hoffa for firing the first trustee were made up "after the fact." (p 26-7) One reason offered by Hoffa for the trusteeship was that an officer of the local had used an ethnic slur. But in fact Hoffa's special assistant, Dane Passo, was thrown out of Bally's Casino in Las Vegas for making anti-Semitic remarks. (p. 25)

Hoffa Claims Union All Cleaned Up

The Hoffa administration is engaged in an expensive campaign to end the IRB and impartial supervision of Teamster elections.

"Hoffa has said he will clean up our union," said Ashley McNeely, a co-chair of Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU). "The IRB report gives members the *real* facts on what is going on in the Marble Palace. Corruption begins at the top, but those on the bottom who complain about it are removed. The members are given lies, a coverup and a PR blitz. We all have a responsibility to get involved to clean up our union."

IBT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
I'M PROFESSOR HOGAN AND THIS IS TEAMSTER CHEM 101. TODAY'S TOPIC CORRUPTION.
$100000
THE FIRST ELEMENT IS FAMILYUM, SPECIFICALLY... HOFFANITE HOGANCLAMIUM AND PASSONITE...
ADD TRUSTEESHIPIUM, FELONIUM LOCASCIO, AND PLENTY OF CASH,
AGITATE,
THEN...
LIQUIFY ALL WAGES, BENEFITS AND CONDITIONS
REDUCE STANDARDS.
DISSOLVE COMPLAINTS AND OTHER IMPURITIES...
FINALLY, REMOVE THE IRB, ADD ANOTHER DOSE OF HOFFA-JECTION, LET IT RISE AND...
BOOM
Not enough democracia raukous-filia.

Want to Read the Corruption Report?

One way to get the IRB's corruption report is from **www.Leedham.org/hogan_report.html** where it is posted in full. It is also available from TDU, but because of its length, there is a $20 charge for copying and shipping. Perhaps members should ask Hoffa's ethics program, RISE, to make it available.

What Actions Will Come of The Report?

The IRB report outlines serious charges against Billy Hogan Jr., Dane Passo, and Ed Jacobson.

Those charges have been referred to the International Union. In each case so far when a Hoffa crony or appointee has been charged, the Hoffa administration has let them off or given them a slap on the wrist. And in each case but one the IRB has held its own hearing and then taken action to remove corrupt officials from our union. No wonder Hoffa wants to put the IRB out of business and handle things himself!

Other Actions Upcoming

▶ Members of Las Vegas Local 631, including the elected officers who were illegally removed by Hoffa, have written to Hoffa demanding the immediate removal of Jacobson as trustee, and an end to the trusteeship.

▶ Legal options are being explored regarding the fact that Chicago Teamster staffers and Billy Hogan's son accepted valuable gifts (all-expense paid golf outings to Stallion Mountain Country Club in Las Vegas) from a nonunion employer.

▶ TDU already blew the whistle on the monetary entanglement of Teamster bosses and nonunion employers with the Hoffa charity golf tournament. Now that the IRB has uncovered how one employer used it to give gifts to union officials he wanted to make a deal with, TDU will be demanding a full investigation to find what other such pay-offs were made under this cover.

▶ Members of Chicago Local 714 have written to the IRB to point out that the same Hogan-related employer, United Temps, provides day labor at McCormick Place.

▶ TDU will have legal counsel review many hundreds of pages of materials (sworn depositions, expense reports, phone logs, etc.) that are exhibits attached to the IRB report. It would appear that Hoffa either knew what was happening, or certainly should have known what was happening, right under his nose.

In each of these issues, if the Hoffa administration and RISE fail to act, then legal action by members is possible.

Hoffa's Response

So far the normally talkative Teamster president has had "no comment" on the report detailing corruption in his administration. The only press statement was that Passo and Hogan have voluntarily taken a leave from their International rep positions.

Hogan has three other union salaries. Most importantly, he heads the powerful Chicago joint council. His family still runs businesses intertwined with the Teamsters.

Absolutely nothing has been said about any corrective actions that would get at the systematic corruption detailed in the report. It will be up to Teamster members to make that happen.

The Tab

"It was unquestioned that pleasing Passo's friends was an adequate reason for the IBT to expend resources." (IRB report, p. 133)

According to sworn testimony, Dane Passo's role in Las Vegas was essentially to "assist in the reelection campaign" for Hoffa. He spent much of the time between April 4 and November 19, 2000 working to implement a sweetheart deal with Hogan's brother's company.

In addition to his salary, which Hoffa *increased* to over $90,000, Teamster members paid approximately $59,932 for Passo's Las Vegas expenses during just this seven month period.

Hotels:	$18,501
Car Rental:	$11,522
Meals and expenses:	$21,256
Airfare:	$8,653
Total:	**$59,932**

All these expenses were approved by Hoffa's assistant, Carlow Scalf. (p. 67) Is this what Hoffa means by financial accountability at the IBT?

The Coverup

Hoffa's Project RISE would essentially give the IBT control over investigations into corruption. But the IRB report on corruption shows they are entirely willing to try to kill investigations by refusing to produce documents or outright lying. The new report provides some details.

"Like other documents damning to Passo, the IBT did not produce that document [a letter complaining about Passo's activity in Chicago] in response to an IRB document request." (p. 25).

"The International had been requested by letter of February 9, 2001 to provide all documents, including draft agreements and draft proposals concerning United. The IBT did not provide any records responsive to this request." (p. 105).The IBT did produce a copy of the contract months later, *only* after coordinating with Passo.

"No investigation [by the IBT] was made into the complaints about Passo's stewardship of Local 631." (pp. 25-26)

"In response to a request for records concerning all telephone calls the IBT received regarding Local 631, the IBT provided copies of only two telephone messages. Scalf's assistant, Leo Deaner, was responsible for handling member complaints. Deaner kept no records concerning any complaints he received." (p. 58).

The Blind Eye

Hoffa ignored numerous complaints about the corrupt deals.

"Hoffa and Scalf turned a blind eye to Passo's activities." (p.124)

"Throughout the time period involved, Hoffa and Scalf would grant enormous power over the local to Passo and ignore concerns from other IBT officials about Passo's suspicious and disruptive conduct." (p. 8)

"Hoffa and Scalf failed to check with either the more experienced trustee or assistant trustee Hoffa had appointed about Passo's claims, but instead rubber-stamped Passo's activities." (p. 121)

The Cost to Members

How much does a sweetheart deal cost working Teamsters? In this case we know the exact answer: $12.39 per hour in lost wages and benefits.

Under the master contract for 1,400 trade-show workers in Las Vegas, Teamsters make $12.49 per hour, plus $3.75 in health and welfare, and $4.15 in pension benefits, or $20.39 per hour. There are also overtime and holiday provisions.

Under the sweetheart deal the Hoffa administration worked for months to impose, workers at United Temps would make $8 per hour, with no benefits. A difference of $12.39 per hour.

While Dane Passo was racking up that $59,000 hotel, restaurant and bar tab, that's what he was prepared to give away for hard-working Teamster members.

Diversion of $30,000 in Union Funds to Reelection

Brennan Gets Off The Hook

Larry Brennan, president of Detroit Local 337 and Joint Council 43, was not found guilty by the IRB in its June 4 decision. The IRB, citing many pages of evidence that Brennan did in fact engineer a scheme to divert a bag of cash with $30,000 in union funds to his campaign, concluded that it was a "close question" but "falls short of the convincing quality we would want before finding that it should be held as implicating Brennan and the other respondents in all aspects of the scheme shown."

The IRB's 31-page decision details the 1996 scheme in Local 337 to give double bonuses to all officers and BAs, then have one agent cash 12 checks, each for $2,500, for the campaign. The $30,000 in cash was placed in a bag and brought back to the union hall and given to Carlow Scalf, now Hoffa's Executive Assistant. Scalf testified that he never put the money into any bank and, after the feds started investigating, destroyed his records.

The bonuses, given just before the late 1996 election, were doubled even as the local was rapidly losing members and money.

Local 337 secretary-treasurer Colonel Myers told federal agents that Brennan launched the scheme to funnel money into the campaign. But later, Myers mysteriously changed his testimony, and did not testify at the IRB hearing. So the IRB, while detailing the scheme in its decision, found there was not a strong enough case to find Brennan and the other Local 337 officials guilty.

Scalf, the bagman in the deal, continues as Hoffa's Executive Assistant.

Labor-Backed Bill Passes Congress

Pension Ceiling Lifted

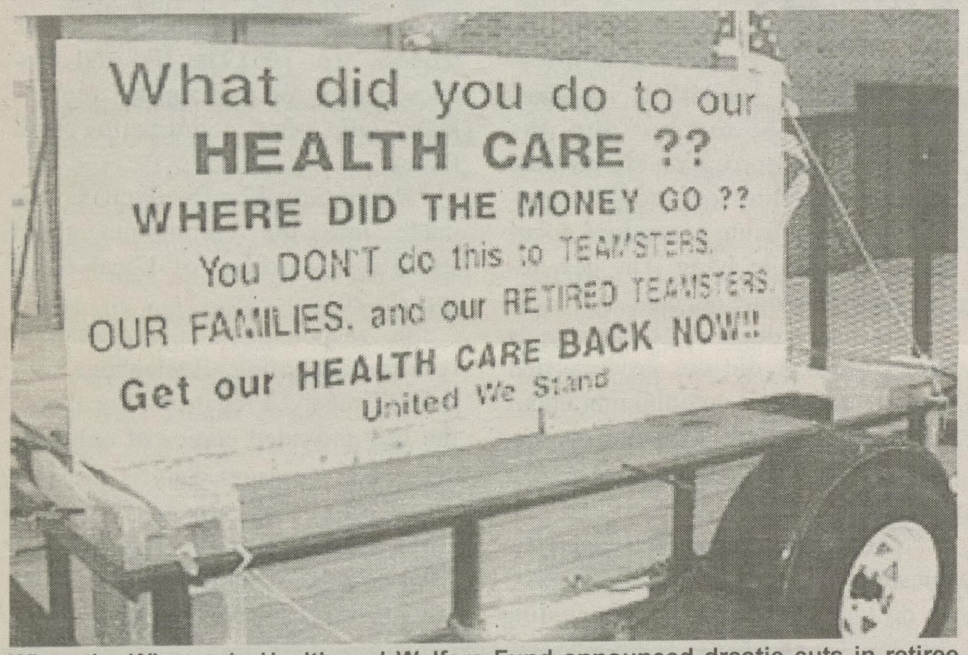
Teamsters covered by Teamster multi-employer pension plans have finally won relief from pension reductions that have hurt some members because of so-called Section 415 restrictions. This law caused some Teamsters, whose pensions would exceed the average of their last three years of earnings, to take cuts in the pensions they earned.

Congress — with lobbying by the Teamsters and a number of other unions — passed relief from this injustice over Memorial Day weekend. It will generally take effect Jan. 1, 2002. The higher limits will apply, with some actuarial adjustments, to those who have already retired as well as new retirees.

The intent of the original law was to prevent certain high-paid employees or executives from taking advantage of pension plans. But it inadvertently hit Teamsters and other union workers who have used their bargaining power to increase pensions, often instead of increasing wages. In the freight industry, where some Teamsters even suffered 15 percent wage cuts but maintained top pension benefits; they were especially hurt by this injustice. For example, some Teamsters who retired and should have been entitled to $3,000 at 30-and-out suffered a reduction in benefits.

The change will also benefit certain Teamster officials who collect multiple pensions worth over $100,000 a year, as top ceilings are raised as well.

Teamsters with questions about the details of Section 415 relief may want to contact their pension plan, or get the four page summary produced by the International Union. Contact your local or the TDU office for a copy.


What did you do to our
HEALTH CARE ??
WHERE DID THE MONEY GO ??
You DON'T do this to TEAMSTERS.
OUR FAMILIES. and our RETIRED TEAMSTERS.
Get our HEALTH CARE BACK NOW!!
United We Stand

When the Wisconsin Health and Welfare Fund announced drastic cuts in retiree health benefits, members organized an ongoing movement to fight back called RAM (Retirees and Members). They are taking the issue to the shops, to the public and, if necessary, to the courts. RAM's sign, pictured above, greeted members and the public at the May Local 200 union meeting.

Solidarity by 1,000 Workers Does It

Nabisco Strikers Win

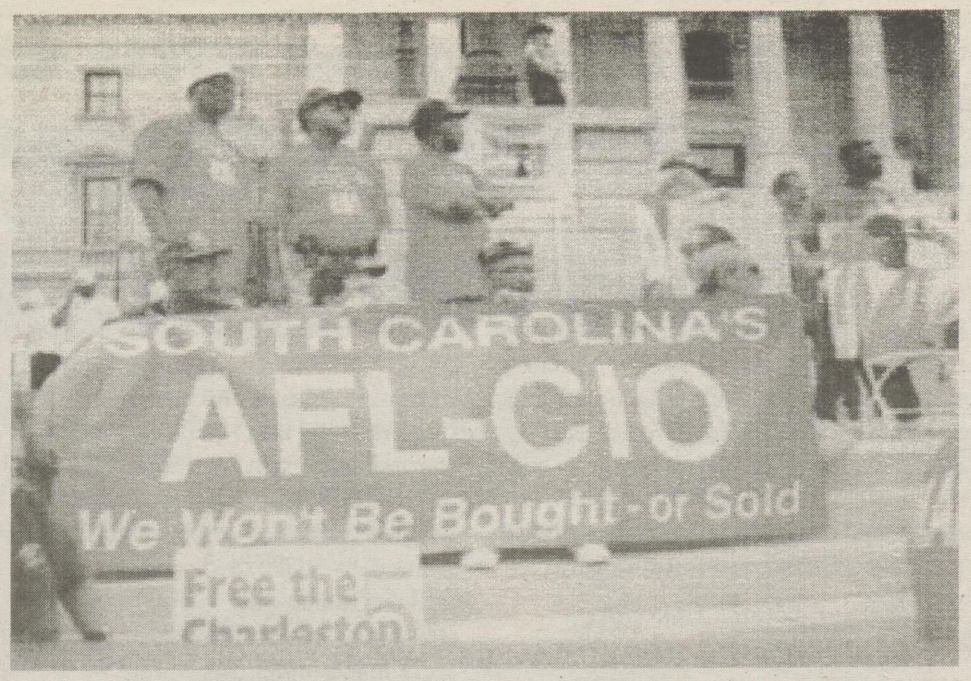
120 Teamsters in locals in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island won their two-week strike against Nabisco in May, and ratified a good contract by a 98 to two margin. Their strike began on May 14, and picket lines were later extended to New York and New Jersey and eventually involved over 1,000 union workers.

Teamsters in locals 64, 559 and 686 took on Nabisco when the company demanded what amounted to a blank check to subcontract out Teamster work. Local 559 Secretary-Treasurer Tom Gilmartin reports that Kraft, which recently acquired Nabisco, told the union that this contract would set a standard that management wanted. Instead, Teamster solidarity made it a standard for Teamsters.

The contract now limits subcontracting, guarantees union jobs, more than doubles pension benefits (which had been very low), and provides a 13 percent wage increase over four years.

How did 120 Teamsters take on Nabisco and Kraft and win? They mobilized themselves, with the full backing of their leadership. New Jersey Local 560, New York Local 807, and Local 719 of the Bakery Union all joined the battle and honored the extended picket lines. By May 23 major Nabisco distribution centers in New York and New Jersey were shut down. The strikers were ready to move on to Philadelphia next.

This group of Teamsters won against a major corporation because they had a coordinated strategy and the solidarity of other unionists.



Labor Solidarity

On June 9 Columbia, S.C., was the site of a giant march and rally in support of the Charleston Five. The five are longshoremen charged with felony rioting in retaliation for their picketing the use of nonunion labor at the port. Support has grown tremendously in recent months. The marchers, over 7,000 strong, demanded that South Carolina drop the charges. New England Joint Council 10 sent their trailer to the event.

Bush Wants More Free Trade on the 'Fast Track'

President Bush has asked Congress for Fast Track approval of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The goal of the FTAA is to create the world's biggest "free trade" zone by expanding the NAFTA model to cover the entire western hemisphere.

Congress rejected Fast Track authority in both 1997 and 1998 after unions, environmental groups and other community allies campaigned against it. Bush has dumped the "Fast Track" name in favor of the more neutral-sounding "trade promotion authority," but the name is the only thing that's changed.

Under the renamed Fast Track, Congress would give President Bush the authority to negotiate the FTAA in accordance with negotiating objectives outlined by Congress.

Bush sent Congress a set of proposed "trade principles" which outlined the guarantees that the administration is seeking through the FTAA. Workers' rights and environmental protections were not on Bush's list.

Under Fast Track, Congress would have limited time to debate any agreement negotiated under these weak "principles." And if Fast Track is approved, Congress would have no power to make changes to any agreement negotiated by Bush. It would be Bush's deal or no deal.

The AFL-CIO has declared a campaign, "to defeat Fast Track again and ensure trade agreements include enforceable workers' rights, human rights and environmental protections." But so far there has not been much in the way of action.

As one of North America's largest unions, the Teamsters can be on the cutting edge of this fight. That means educating members and the community on the FTAA and the dangers of so-called "free trade." And it means linking up with other unions as well as environmental, student and human rights organizations to mobilize nationally and locally against Fast Track.

We can and must defeat Fast Track and the FTAA.

Detroit demonstration against FTAA, attended by many TDU members.

Ousted Teamster Leader Looked the Other Way...

Million Dollar Victory for Workers in Wage Scam

Imagine having a job where all of your work was off the clock. No fixed start time. No fixed end time.

Imagine working 45 to 60 hours a week with no overtime pay and receiving the same wages every week no matter how many hours you worked.

You would want a union. But what if you already had a union? And what if your union representatives were in on the scam?

New York Local 805 Teamster Yanko Fuentes doesn't have to imagine. He lived this nightmare for years. But it's a new day for Fuentes and 103 other employees and ex-employees of Harold Levison Trucking who recently won an award of nearly $1 million for unpaid wages.

Incredibly, this is the second time that Levison workers have won a wage and hour award through the Department of Labor.

"We actually won a case in 1990. But managers took our money back," Fuentes said. "Supervisors came around and the people were told. 'If you don't give the money back, you'll lose your job.' "

To prevent these kinds of abuses, Levison workers joined Teamsters Local 805 in 1992 but the scam continued.

Management installed a time clock. But the workers were paid exactly the same amount of money each week and the same number of hours appeared on each pay stub — no matter how many hours they actually worked.

"When we called the union to complain we were told, 'Keep your mouth shut you should be glad you have a job,' " Fuentes said.

Fed up, Local 805 members revolted in the fall of 1998. In local elections, they ousted the old guard incumbent and elected several new officers.

A few months later, Levison workers lodged a complaint with the Department of Labor. The investigation and subsequent lawsuit took more than two years. A federal judge ordered that Levison pay double damages on the unpaid wages, bringing the total to $991,700.

The company has appealed the decision. In the meantime, the award is in a special account gathering interest for the workers.

Throughout the two-year battle, management tirelessly campaigned to convince workers that they could never prevail.

"The company told people they were wasting their time." Fuentes said. "They used a lot of scare tactics and warned us that there were going to be consequences."

Intimidation is still a factor at the company. But Fuentes is hopeful.

"I think this shows that you don't have to be afraid. You don't have to play by the employer's rules," Fuentes said. "The people came together and stuck together and we won. It shows that with the union backing us, we can do a lot of good things."

Chicago Local 743 Members Protest H&W Cuts

Hundreds of members of Chicago Local 743 picketed their union meeting on June 4 in protest of major cuts in health insurance. In February 1999 members where told that the fund had $16 million. Now they are told that the fund is nearly broke and is increasing out-of-pocket costs to members. For many members, costs for family insurance coverage have risen from zero to $400 a month.

Local 743 President (and International VP) Chester Glanton and Recording Secretary Richard Lopez are the union trustees of the plan. The members are demanding that they reimburse the plan for the missing $16 million and that members suffer no loss in benefits.

Louisville Local 89

'Clerical Error' Extends Contract; Teamsters Wildcat

Local 89 Teamsters who build and repair huge river barges at Jeffboat, across the Ohio River from Louisville, organized for months for a better contract. Unsafe working conditions were a major issue, along with wages. Jeffboat employs 800 workers.

On April 30, over 500 members packed the Local 89 union hall to hear President Fred Zuckerman recommend management's substandard final offer. They rejected it four to one, and were prepared to strike.

That's when Zuckerman informed them that due to a "clerical error" made by the local two months earlier the union could not call a strike. The contract's duration clause required the local to contact the employer 60 days in advance if they wanted the contract to expire; the local did so a day late. The union had bargained for two months without a strike threat, and without informing the members.

On Monday, May 1, a handful of members set up a picket line at one of five entrances. Word spread quickly and soon the yard was shut down.

The wildcat strike lasted for a week, with less than 10 members crossing the line, despite threats from the company and the local union..

On May 7, the members rejected the same substandard offer from the company by a larger margin. After gaining a guarantee of no recriminations from the company, they ended the one-week walkout and decided to bring their struggle back onto the shop floor. They are currently working under the one-year extension of the old contract.

How did the International Union respond to the members' demands and the local's inaction? VP Walt Lytle proposed transferring the members into another local.

The workers at Jeffboat are putting pressure on the company to reopen negotiations and to form a worker-controlled health and safety committee that can shut down unsafe work. They are backing up their demands with rank and file power.

Do You Want ...

- Input from other Teamsters on how to deal with problems at your workplace and in your local?
- A chance to meet leaders of the Teamster reform movement and Teamster activists from across North America?
- To learn new skills for organizing on the job and in your local?
- To hear from experts on laws that can help you at work?

Yes? Then plan now to attend the

TDU Convention

Sept. 21-23

Pittsburgh Hilton

The convention will offer all of the above, and more! Registration forms will be available soon. But plan now — you won't want to miss it!

Hoffa's Numbers Don't Add Up

On IBT Membership and Organizing

"But we are doing great in organizing. ... Recently I saw a number come across our desk, and it was 1.5 million. So we are growing."

James Hoffa

address to the National Press Club, June 1, 2000

Number of Teamsters according to Hoffa:	1.5 million
Number of Teamsters according to LM2 forms signed by Hoffa and filed with the Department of Labor:	1.398 million
Change in the size of our union since Hoffa took office:	minus 11,000

Teamster organizing victories in the year before Hoffa took office:	403
Teamster organizing victories in 2000:	228

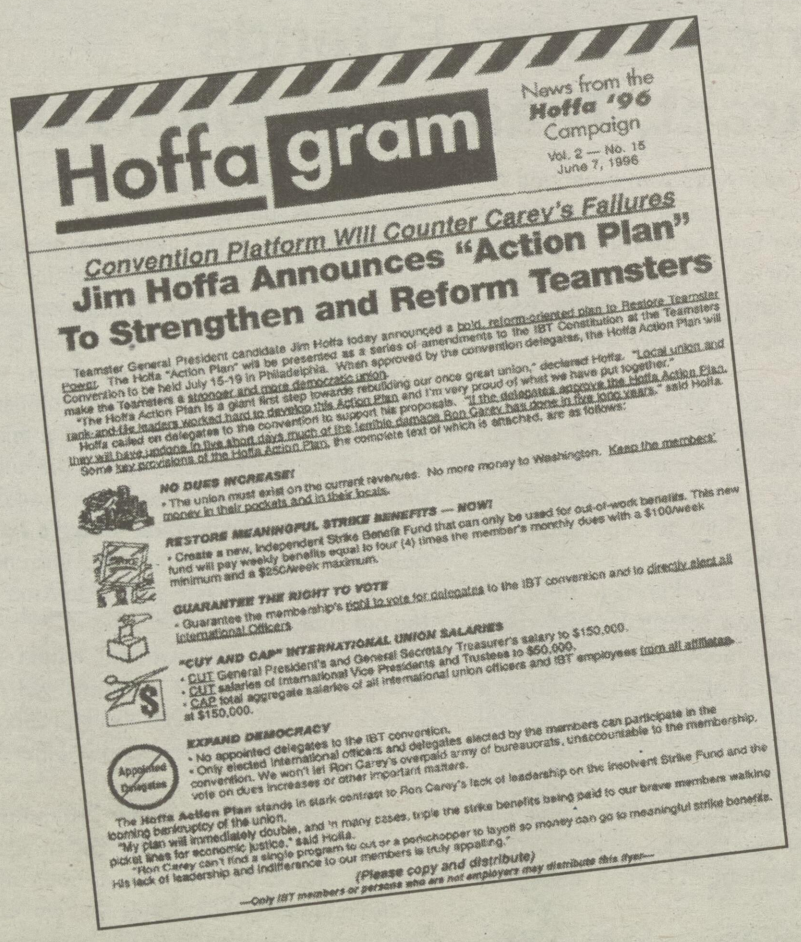
Source: Records of the National Labor Relations Board.

"My dream is that the organizing department here in this building should be a desk and a telephone."

John Murphy, IBT Director of Organizing

*The **American Prospect**, March 12-26, 2001*

On Hoffa's Campaign Pledge to Cut and Cap Officers' Salaries



Hoffa gram

News from the **Hoffa '96** Campaign

Vol. 2 — No. 15
June 7, 1996

Convention Platform Will Counter Carey's Failures

Jim Hoffa Announces "Action Plan" To Strengthen and Reform Teamsters

Teamster General President candidate Jim Hoffa today announced a bold, reform-oriented plan to Restore Teamster Power. The Hoffa "Action Plan" will be presented as a series of amendments to the IBT Constitution at the Teamsters Convention to be held July 15-19 in Philadelphia. When approved by the convention delegates, the Hoffa Action Plan will make the Teamsters a stronger and more democratic union.

"The Hoffa Action Plan is a giant first step towards rebuilding our once great union," declared Hoffa. "Local union and rank-and-file leaders worked hard to develop this Action Plan and I'm very proud of what we have put together."

Hoffa called on delegates to the convention to support his proposals. "If the delegates approve the Hoffa Action Plan, they will have undone in five short days much of the terrible damage Ron Carey has done in five long years," said Hoffa.

Some key provisions of the Hoffa Action Plan, the complete text of which is attached, are as follows:

NO DUES INCREASE!
• The union must exist on the current revenues. No more money to Washington. Keep the members' money in their pockets and in their locals.

RESTORE MEANINGFUL STRIKE BENEFITS — NOW!
• Create a new, independent Strike Benefit Fund that can only be used for out-of-work benefits. This new fund will pay weekly benefits equal to four (4) times the member's monthly dues with a $100/week minimum and a $250/week maximum.

GUARANTEE THE RIGHT TO VOTE
• Guarantee the membership's right to vote for delegates to the IBT convention and to directly elect all International Officers.

"CUT AND CAP" INTERNATIONAL UNION SALARIES
• CUT General President's and General Secretary-Treasurer's salary to $150,000.
• CUT salaries of International Vice Presidents and Trustees to $50,000.
• CAP total aggregate salaries of all international union officers and IBT employees from all affiliates at $150,000.

EXPAND DEMOCRACY
• No appointed delegates to the IBT convention.
• Only elected international officers and delegates elected by the members can participate in the convention. We won't let Ron Carey's overpaid army of bureaucrats, unaccountable to the membership, vote on dues increases or other important matters.

The **Hoffa Action Plan** stands in stark contrast to Ron Carey's lack of leadership on the insolvent Strike Fund and the looming bankruptcy of the union.

"My plan will immediately double, and in many cases, triple the strike benefits being paid to our brave members walking picket lines for economic justice," said Hoffa.

"Ron Carey can't find a single program to cut or a porkchopper to layoff so money can go to meaningful strike benefits. His lack of leadership and indifference to our members is truly appalling."

(Please copy and distribute)

—Only IBT members or persons who are not employers may distribute this flyer—

Salary Hoffa said he would take in 1996 campaign literature:	$150,000
Hoffa's 2000 salary:	$228,713
Number of Hoffa's running mates and political appointees who receive a multiple salary from the International Union:	137
Number of them who donated to Hoffa's campaign as of January 2001:	126
Amount they donated:	$216,994

Sources: IBT LM-2 financial reports, Hoffa campaign CCERs, 1996 Hoffa campaign literature (see left).